

Thank you for your interest in the Martinsville Parks and Recreation Community Garden program. MPR will be operating this Community Gardening program to give local residents an opportunity to meet your neighbors, to develop a neighborhood watch system, produce vegetables and fruits for your own consumption, educational experiences, or provide produce for those in need of nutrition in the community.

There are no fees associated with the use of a garden spot, but you must fill out a registration form and agree to abide by the rules in order to keep your gardening spot. In return, you will be given use of a plot of land (plot size depends on the number of participants who register for the program). Our gardens are organic only, which means we do not allow the use of chemical pesticides, fertilizers, or weed killers at anytime.

Below are the addresses of each of the garden plots currently in the program:

22 Moss Street - Corner of Market and Moss Streets across from the Senior Center.

1 Progress Drive – Entrance to Clearview Business Park, on left turning onto Progress Dr. and 1050 Oak St. (Oak Street Park location)

If you are interested in becoming a Community Gardener, please fill out the enclosed registration form and return to Martinsville Parks and Recreation. Thank you again for your interest in the City of Martinsville Community Gardens Program!



# City of Martinsville Community Gardens

## Is Community Gardening for You?

A community garden is a place where people of many different backgrounds join together for the common goal of “gardening.” It is important to understand that gardening in a community garden is much different than gardening at home. A community garden is a shared space, where we need to be considerate of other people and their plants. You will need to make the time to come to the garden - it won't be as easy as stepping into your back yard. The following information may be useful to you if you are thinking about becoming a Community Gardener with City of Martinsville.

### A Typical Growing Season

A garden plot requires time and constant effort at least 7 months out of the year in order to produce a healthy harvest. Here are some basic tasks that will be required of you:

- **Preparing Your Plot.** Chemical fertilizers and pesticides are not allowed. Healthy soil leads to healthy plants. Loosening your soil and adding compost before you plant will make your plants healthier and more resistant to pests and disease.
- **Planting.** You must take care in planning your garden, placing plants far enough apart so they don't overlap.
- **Providing Water.** Seedbeds must be hand-watered daily until sprouts appear above ground. Seedlings must be hand-watered daily for the first two weeks. During hot and dry periods, you may be required to water your seedlings as much as twice a day.
- **Weeding.** Time will be needed to keep weeds down in your plot and its surrounding pathways. By getting to weeds early in the spring, you will save on time and efforts later in the season.
- **Harvesting.** As plants mature and begin to produce, you must be there to harvest the fruits of your labor – the best reward of gardening! Keeping ripe produce picked reduces garden pests and vandalism.
- **Preparing for Winter.** At the end of the season, the deadline to remove dead plant material from your plot is in early November. Your soil will require a boost after giving so much to you throughout the growing season. The City will add compost to replenish the soil for the next following year after growing season is complete.

### Time

As with any other part of life, the more time you invest in gardening, the better your garden plot will be. Below you will find a general estimate of what having a garden plot will require:

Garden Task	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
Weeding/Bed Preparation	2 hours	2 hours	1 hour
Watering	1 hour	.5 hour	0 hour
Planting	1.5 hours	.5 hour	.5 hour
Harvesting	.5 hour	1 hour	1.5 hours
<b>Total Hours per Week:</b>	<b>5 hours/week</b>	<b>4 hours/week</b>	<b>3 hours/week</b>

### Giving More to Your Garden

Community Gardeners are required to contribute **6 hours** during the season to tend common areas, do general garden maintenance, and attend Spring and Fall Garden Gatherings. (2 hours in Spring, 2 hours in Summer, 2 hours in Fall) A community garden takes a lot of work to run well, and everyone is expected to participate. (Many hands make light work.) Some examples of community responsibilities are maintaining paths, fixing tools, pruning back trees and bushes, and organizing social events.

### Benefits and rewards

If you've never gardened in a community garden before, you can look forward to more than fresh fruits and veggies. Cultural exchanges sprout and new friendships grow among diverse groups of people.

Community gardens are common ground for growing plants that feed, heal and give aesthetic pleasure. They are civic spaces where people work and recreate to nourish themselves, their families and friends; the gardeners' shared labor also builds a stronger sense of belonging to their physical environment and connection

to other gardeners. Community gardens are the collective effort of people with the patience and determination to make things grow.

The gardeners in City of Martinsville are a remarkable mix of people from many backgrounds, so the gardens function as some of the most multicultural places in the city. Community gardens not only nurture green spaces but foster the development of a community identity and spirit. Community gardens often set aside space for community get-togethers, serving as the modern-day equivalent of the ancient plazas in urban areas where people would gather to meet and spend time together. Community garden spaces also allow for interaction with nature and the productive use of land. Because community gardens are beautiful and visually unique in an urban setting, they function as calming devices.

Community gardening brings together people and encourages interaction. Interest in urban gardening has often led to community-based efforts to deal with other social concerns. Many people have developed leadership skills as a result of being involved with their community garden.

Community gardens should be inclusive and welcoming to all people. Regardless of age, education, language barrier, or disability, all gardeners are expected to participate both in the upkeep of the garden -- with tasks like caring for the common areas -- and in garden decision-making including setting policies and choosing leaders.

By choosing to be in a community garden, you'll be gardening in close proximity to others. You can learn from these folks either actively (by asking questions) or passively (by observation). People of different cultural backgrounds garden differently; if your community garden is culturally diverse, you may be surprised at what you'll learn even if you've been gardening many years.

# **City of Martinsville Community Gardens**

## **2011 Community Gardens Information & Policies**

Our mission is to help people grow and share fresh produce; to teach urban youth responsibility, cooperation and ecological awareness; and to be an active resource for sustainable organic gardening.

Our community gardening policies and procedures are important for all community gardeners to understand. If you have any questions about this information, please call the Martinsville Parks and Recreation at 403-5140 or email at [gcody@ci.martinsville.va.us](mailto:gcody@ci.martinsville.va.us).

### **Reserving your plot**

Each gardener is entitled to one plot (approximately 4 x 16 feet or dimensions might change depending on number of registrants for a particular area) if space is available. If there is space remaining after Sept. 1, 2010 gardeners will have the opportunity to rent additional plots for the remainder of the season. A garden plot rental is "FREE" and is required of all gardeners. Garden plots must be cleared of weeds during rental of plot. If a gardener has not used his/her plot after 1 month of renting a spot, the plot will be given to another gardener.

### **Land**

There are some planting restrictions (i.e. trees and some perennials).

### **No herbicides, pesticides or chemical fertilizers allowed**

Our goal is to create and nurture healthy soil and a healthy plant environment in the garden. Because plant and soil health deteriorates with the use of chemicals, they are not allowed in any of our community gardens. Gardeners using chemical weed killers, fertilizers and/or pesticides will lose their gardening privileges!

### **Weeds and trash**

The City requires that we keep all weeds below six inches in height and twelve inches in width. It is the gardeners' responsibility to weed their plots, control the weeds and trash in their own plots and adjacent pathways during the season, and to clear their plot of trellis materials and debris at the end of the season. Gardeners are also required to assist with weeding common areas.

### **Water use and mulch**

Water spouts will be provided at garden areas with access to water through a combination lock on spiket, only is water access is available. The City of Martinsville will maintain this water system. Please do not alter the system in any way. Please report any problems or leaks to Martinsville Parks and Recreation (403-5140). Each gardener will be given the combination to the lock and is responsible to keep this information confidential. You can also help make sure that water is not wasted, and greatly reduce your garden's water needs by using mulch (this also helps keep out weeds).

### **No Rebar**

For safety reasons, rebar is not allowed for staking or trellising.

### **Cooperation**

This project will be more successful as all of our gardeners work together. You also make a contribution of your time by participating in the Spring and Fall planning meetings, as well as general maintenance throughout the season.

### **Meetings**

Gardeners are required to attend the spring garden meeting (middle of March) as well as the fall garden meeting (beginning of September) in order to keep their plot reserved.

### **Theft**

Stealing of any kind is not permitted and will result in immediate loss of gardening privileges and forfeiture of any crops remaining in the garden.

### **Disrespectful Behavior**

Disrespectful or abusive language, or destructive behavior (including vandalism) may result in the immediate loss of all gardening privileges, and forfeiture of any crops remaining in the garden.

### **Notification**

All plots will be inspected on a regular basis. Gardeners of plots that have not been planted, are weedy, or do

not meet any of these guidelines, will be notified. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in forfeiture of the plot. It is the responsibility of the gardener to notify the Community Garden Coordinator (MPR) if you are no longer able to tend to your plot; will be absent for a long period of time; or have asked a friend to tend to their garden.

**Please remember**

The purpose of our community gardening program is to provide access to land, water, education and general garden administration. The care and maintenance of the garden is the collective responsibility of the community gardeners.

**City of Martinsville Parks and Recreation Responsibilities**

Martinsville Parks and Recreation is responsible for:

- Administering the Community Gardening Program.
- Registering gardeners and assigning available plots to each gardener.
- Providing technical assistance and skills training when possible.
- Maintenance of water systems and overall administration of each garden site.

\*\*\*Martinsville Parks and Recreation reserves the right to make changes or exceptions to policies where and when appropriate.

**City of Martinsville Community Gardens  
2011 Community Garden Plot Application/Registration Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Garden site preference \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Community Garden Rules and Gardener's Responsibilities**

Each gardener must understand and agree to the following rules and responsibilities before receiving garden privileges:

- Gardeners are responsible for planting and maintaining their own garden plots.
- Chemical weed killers, pesticides and chemical fertilizers are not allowed in the garden.
- Gardeners are responsible for assisting in maintenance of common areas at each garden. Two hours each season (Spring, Summer, Fall) for a total of 6 are expected from each gardener.
- Gardeners are responsible for keeping the weeds in their gardens and adjoining pathways below six inches in height and twelve inches in width.
- Gardeners are responsible for weeding their plots and clearing and/or winterizing their plots at the end of the season, by the date specified by Martinsville Parks and Recreation.
- All plots will be inspected regularly. Gardeners of plots that have not been planted, are weedy, or do not meet any of these guidelines, will be notified. Failure to respond within 14 days will result in forfeiture of plot.
- Gardeners are responsible for notifying Martinsville Parks and Recreation if no longer able to tend their plot; will be absent for a long period of time; or have asked a friend to tend their garden.
- Stealing of any kind is not permitted and will result in immediate loss of gardening privileges and forfeiture of any crops remaining in the garden.
- Disrespectful or abusive language or destructive behavior can result in the immediate loss of all gardening privileges, and forfeiture of any crops remaining in the garden.

By signing this agreement, I hereby give permission to share my phone number with other community gardeners unless I have checked the following box.

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I do not want my phone number shared with other Community Gardeners. Please do not publish my phone number in the directory.

I have read the Community Garden Rules and Gardeners' Responsibilities and understand that failure to comply with the rules will result in the loss of my current or future gardening privileges.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Waiver of Liability**

*In consideration of being permitted to participate in the City of Martinsville Community Garden Program, I (please print name) \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby, for myself, my executors and administrators, release, discharge, indemnify, agree to defend, and hold harmless the City of Martinsville of land used in connection with the Gardens Program, and their employees and directors from any and all liability for bodily harm or damage or loss of whatever kind arising from, or in any manner or form connected with the City of Martinsville Community Gardening Program and the Dept. of Parks and Recreation.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this registration form to us, and we will notify you when we have a plot available.  
**Martinsville Parks and Recreation, Attn: Community Gardens, 746 B Indian Trail, Martinsville,  
VA 24112. Fax = 276-403-5376**

**AI** = American Indian/Alaskan native (Central & S. America), **A** = Asian, **B** = Black/African American, **PI** = Pacific Islander, **W** = White (origins Europe, Middle East, or N. Africa), **AI/W** = American Indian & White, **A/W** = Asian & White, **B/W** = Black & White.